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ABSTRACT

One of the first educational institutions funded for the establishment of a training program for Viet Nam veterans was Oscar Rose Junior College at Midwest City, Oklahoma. The developmental program began in September 1972, with 112 veterans in the original training phase. The present study was conducted during the spring semester of 1972-73, with second group of high-risk, educationally disadvantaged male veterans (N=105) serving as participants. This study was designed to be useful for those persons in higher education institutions who are presently involved in, or planning to initiate, programs for veterans. Continued and expanded research must be initiated to identify areas of the program which are not contributing to the facilitation of students' attainment of the proposed educational objectives of the various institutions. (Author)

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PERSONALITY CHANGE AMONG EDUCATIONALLY DISADVANTAGED VETERANS AS A FUNCTION OF ENROLLMENT IN A JUNIOR COLLEGE DEVELOPMENTAL PROJECT

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One of the first educational institutions funded for the establishment of a training program for Viet Nam veterans was Oscar Rose Junior College at Midwest City, Oklahoma. A community college with an enrollment of approximately 4,500, Oscar Rose Junior College is adjacent to Tinker Air Force Base, one of the largest Air Force training and shipping facilities in the world. The developmental program began in September, 1972 with 112 veterans in the original training phase. The present study was conducted during the spring semester of 1972-73, with the second group of high-risk, educationally disadvantaged male veterans (N = 105) serving as the participants.

A survey of theoretical positions revealed some support among researchers concerning supportive treatment and subsequent change in self-concept and personality dimensions. An analysis of relevant studies, however, suggested the need for additional evidence to determine whether veteran response to a supportive program would produce a statistically significant change in self-concept and personality. In discussing the importance of studying the young adult in higher education and the potential impact of the college years, Sanford suggested: "To say just how the curriculum, or the various parts of it, may be utilized to induce developmental changes in the personality is probably the central problem of educational research." If college officials were to develop special curriculums for veteran students which bring about effective changes in self-concept, it seemed critical that data concerning the personality dimensions of students in the special programs be given at least equal attention to that given to their academic status and progress.

This study was designed to answer two primary questions: (1) Would students experience a positive change in self-concept as a result of participation in a developmental education program? (2) Would students experience a positive change in personality as a result of participation in a developmental education program? Consequently, the research aspects of this study were designed to accommodate three functions: (1) to measure subjects' self-concept and personality dimensions before participation in the special supportive project; (2) to involve subjects in the specially designed developmental education program for veterans; and (3) to measure subjects' self-concept and personality dimensions after participation in the special supportive project.

The Oscar Rose Junior College program was designed for veterans whose (1) pre-service educational achievement would not normally be acceptable for admission into an institution of higher education, and (2) economic background has not encouraged them to seek higher education. The curriculum of the project consisted of the following four courses:

(1)	Developmental Reading	3 credit hours
(2)	English Composition	3 credit hours
(3)	Psychology (Personal Adjustment)	3 credit hours
(4)	Basic Math	3 credit hours

In addition to classroom instruction, the student had available all of the instructional and tutorial assistance which he needed to insure his success in the program. The entire project was designed to reinforce the positive problem solving ability of the veteran student. With the foundation that the veteran student was provided within this program, it was predicted that he would be able to move either into other academic course work or special skill areas in technical education fields.

The 105 subjects of this study were 48% white, 28% black, 17% Indian, 3% Chicano and 4% other. The mean age of the participants was 25.5 years. Fifty-three percent of the subjects were married while 41 percent were single, and six percent were divorced. Seventy-nine percent of the respondents were residents of Oklahoma, and 21 percent were classified as non-residents. The mean educational level attained by the fathers of this group was eleven years, while the mothers' educational attainment was eight years. Seventy-seven percent of the subjects were high school graduates as compared to 23 percent who did not graduate. The mean enrollment hours during the testing period for these respondents was 10 hours.

Two hypotheses were tested by using the data collected from a pretest-posttest administration of the Sixteen Personality Factor Questionnaire and the Tennessee Self-Concept Scale. The sixteen pre- and posttest areas of the Tennessee were also compared for the participants. The Student's t-test was used to make comparisons required for testing the hypotheses. Both hypotheses were tested at the .05 level of significance.

An analysis of the t-values for each factor on the Sixteen Personality Factor Questionnaire indicated statistically significant pretest-posttest changes on three of the sixteen personality variables. Reference to Factor G, Low Superego Strength vs. Superego Strength suggested that veteran participants became significantly more persevering and determined, more responsible, more emotionally disciplined, more consistently ordered, more conscientious and more concerned about rules and standards after their participation in the developmental program. In order to synthesize this personality finding, it might be summarized that subjects moved toward self-controlled behavior and a "drive to do one's best," i.e., persistence according to performance as indicated on Factor G. It is important to note here that according to Cattell, Factor G correlates negatively with delinquency, sociopathic behavior and

homosexuality and positively with school and general achievement. In group dynamics experiments, Factor G significantly distinguishes leaders from followers, and is associated in group members generally, with a higher percentage of group-task-oriented participation of all kinds.

In addition, positive change was observed on Factor H, Threctia vs. Parmia, ability to face grueling emotional situations and exhibition of greater strength in ability to face threat. Finally, significant change was recorded for respondents on Factor Q_3, Low Self-Sentiment vs. High Self-Sentiment, suggesting that subjects became more controlled, more capable of exercising will power, more persistent in completing tasks and more concerned with self-images. Factor Q_3 had in previous studies shown significant relationship to success in school. Hypothetically, it represented the extent to which the subject had crystallized for himself a clear, consistent, admired pattern of socially approved behavior, to which he made definite efforts to conform.

An analysis of the t-values for each area of the Tennessee Self-Concept Scale indicated statistically significant pretest-posttest changes on seven of the ten self-concept factors. Changes were observed on Self-Criticism, Self-Esteem, Self-Satisfaction, Behavior, Personal Self, Family Self, and Social Self. As was expected, no significant change was observed in the factors of Identity, Physical Self, and Moral/Ethical Self. Reference to area one, Self-Criticism indicated that respondents became significantly more critical of themselves, thus supporting the previously discussed finding of a significant move toward superego strength, concern about standards, and exercise of will power. Subjects made positive gains in area two, Self-Esteem, which suggested significant gain in self-confidence. Area four, Self-Satisfaction, reflected significant increase in self-acceptance. Positive change

was also observed in area five, Behavior, which denoted significantly strengthened ability in the subjects to perceive behavior more accurately.

Further reference to Self-Concept variables indicated that participants positively changed in area eight, Personal Self, which suggested significantly heightened feelings of personal worth and adequacy. Closely related to the previous findings, area nine, Family Self, produced significant positive change in the subjects' feelings of worth and value as family members. Finally, respondents made significant gains in the area of sense of adequacy and worth related to social interactions, Social Self.

The findings presented above indicated the appropriateness of the following conclusions:

(1) Harrison discussed the importance of peer identity and the resulting alienation a veteran may feel after his enrollment in a higher education institution. It might be concluded that the establishment of a special program for veterans had reduced the interpersonal alienation, as well as the intrapersonal alienation, which normally could occur during this initial period in college. Involvement in the program seemed to have encouraged identification, both with other veterans experiencing similar problems and, importantly, with the school structure and its faculty and counselors.

(2) Ausubel and Sullivan stressed the importance of social experiences in the formation of self-concept. From this one could conclude, perhaps, that social experiences were an important factor in improving self-concept. If this assumption is valid then it might be concluded that the establishment of a developmental program, in addition to reducing veteran alienation, also had been instrumental in strengthening perception of self-value.

(3) Finally, from an analysis of self-concept and personality change reported herein, it seemed appropriate that a statistically significant change on the majority of self-concept areas studied represented what Peck had called a decrease in cognitive dissonance resulting from less self-esteem

alpha and beta press conflict. In other words, conflict between social expectations (objective reality) and personal desires (subjective reality) appeared to have significantly diminished.

In conclusion, this study was designed to be useful for those persons in higher education institutions who are presently involved in or planning to initiate programs for veterans. The challenges for this potential population of approximately eight million veterans were personal, social, economic, and educational all interwoven. Continued and expanded research must be initiated to identify areas of the program which are not contributing to the facilitation of students' attainment of the proposed educational objectives of the various institutions.

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